

INFORMATION REPORT

(a) INTEND

East Germany

DATE DISTR. 26 JAN 1962

(b) SUBJECT

East German Project to Transfer the Mouth of the Elbe River to the Baltic Sea

NO. OF PAGES 1

PLACE ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.
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The East German Government is preparing a secret project to transfer the mouth of the Elbe River to the Baltic Sea. Pertinent offices have already been requested to submit geological and tectonic reports relative to this project. 1

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1. [REDACTED] Comment. In the summer of 1951 the SDC requested a description of the Elbe River waterway. In August 1952 the Ministry for State Security issued a directive discontinuing maintenance work on the Elbe River from Schnackenburg downstream to Boizenburg. This stretch forms the boundary between East and West Germany.

[REDACTED] Judging from the large water construction projects in the U.S.S.R., the project of redirecting the Elbe River by no means seems inconceivable. The distance from Lenzen on the Elbe River to Wismar is a scant 100 km, and the difference of water level as far as the divide at the Schweriner See (Schwerin Lake) is 23 meters. It is possible that a new river bed, up to about 30 meters deep, may be dug to draw off the Elbe River completely. This would have the most disastrous consequences for cities on the lower course of the Elbe River, particularly Hamburg, whereas Wismar would become a natural harbor. Its previous difficulties, namely insufficient depths and silting, would automatically be remedied. Wismar would then become the main port to East Germany.

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